## LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

# **St. Croix National Scenic Riverway**

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# LONG-RANGE INTERPRETIVE PLAN

Within the planning hierarchy of the National Park Service (NPS), a park's Long Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) is one of a handful of strategic plans built on the park's General Management Plan. The LRIP describes interpretive and educational programs, facilities, and media for the next 10 years and is the keystone of the Comprehensive Interpretive Planning (CIP) process. Annual Implementation Plans (AIPs) outline specific work to be completed each year. Throughout the CIP process, the park staff will compile and maintain the park's Interpretive Database (ID) which archives park planning efforts.

This LRIP will guide the staff at St. Croix National Scenic Riverway over the next ten years in their efforts to orient visitors to the Riverway's recreational opportunities and interpret its natural history and human history stories. This plan was created in 2004-05 with input from many partners. It describes visitor experience goals and recommends ways to achieve those goals through interpretive media (e.g., publications, exhibits, waysides, and the Riverway's website), facilities (e.g., visitor centers), education programs (e.g., water quality), and personal services (e.g., Riverway interpretive programs, and staff contacts and interactions).

Implementing the recommendations described in this LRIP is largely dependent on additional NPS funding and cooperation from Riverway partners.

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Long-Range Interpretive Plan (LRIP) provides a 10-year vision for the future of National Park Service (NPS) interpretation at St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (often abbreviated as the "Riverway" in this LRIP), a linear park along the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers. The LRIP describes desired visitor experiences and recommends appropriate means to achieve them while protecting and preserving the Riverway's natural and cultural resources. The first section of this LRIP, from pages 1 to 36, confirms the foundations of the Riverway: its purpose, significance, interpretive themes, visitor profiles, visitor experience goals, issues and influences, and existing conditions.

The LRIP's second section, starting on page 37, describes recommended actions to be taken by the Riverway staff and its partners over the next ten years to improve the Riverway's interpretive media and interpretive and educational programs through the recommended actions listed below and on the following three pages.

## **Interpretive Media**

#### **Audiovisual Programs**

- Produce a new, 12-minute digital audiovisual program (i.e., "Park Film") for showing at each Riverway Center
- Develop an audiovisual program to train employees of organizations that bring groups to the Riverway
- Develop a PowerPoint program that provides a general introduction to the Riverway

#### **Exhibits**

- Plan, design, and produce new exhibits for the St. Croix River Visitor Center
- Plan, design, and produce new exhibits for the Namekagon River Visitor Center
- Develop a plan for an alternative use for the Marshland Center and convert it to this use with the help of partners
- Develop indoor and outdoor self-service exhibits interpreting the Riverway's cultural heritage at a restored Riverside School
- Plan, design, and produce outdoor, self-service exhibits for each Riverway Center

#### Outreach and Partner exhibits

- Develop exhibits and other media to highlight the Riverway at partner locations
- Create table-top and free standing exhibits for use at festivals, expositions, and at Riverway landings
- Add markings to interpretive vans, canoes, and kayaks to increase visibility and enhance Riverway identification

#### **Publications**

- Revise and redesign the Official Map and Guide for the Riverway
- Enhance section maps by improving design and adding mileage information
- Encourage and support development of river guide books for both the St. Croix River and Namekagon River
- Reprint and distribute trash bags with interpretive messages

#### Wayside Exhibits

- Prepare a Wayside Exhibit Plan for the entire Riverway
- Produce and install exhibits specified in the Wayside Exhibit Plan
- Coordinate the wayside planning effort with Riverway planning to improve wayfinding and identification signs

#### Website

- Enhance the Riverway's website by adding more information and increasing the interpretive components
- Add a map incorporating photos and other information helpful in trip planning
- Enhance interactivity with the Riverway's website by visitors and educational groups

## **Interpretation and Educational Programs:**

#### **Schools and Educational Groups**

- Develop a set of five core Riverway programs
  - 2nd Grade: "River Signs" focus on observation of nature
  - 4th Grade: "Rivers are Alive" focus on the ecology of the rivers
  - 4th Grade: focus on the cultural heritage of the rivers and region
  - Middle school: focus on the Riverway's water quality
  - High School: focus on river conservation and current critical issues along the Riverway
- Present teacher workshops to increase teacher knowledge and understanding of Riverway programs and supportive materials and information
- Develop an email newsletter for educators on Riverway issues

#### Programs for the Public

- Expand informal interpretive contacts at high use locations along the Riverway
- Expand Saturday evening programs to public and private locations along the Riverway
- Provide programs, training, and resources to camps and other organizations that are bringing groups to the Riverway
- Expand programs for many audiences who underutilize current programming

### Special Events and Outreach

- Cooperate with partners and neighboring communities on special events along the Riverway and within the region
- Present one special event each year on the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers
- Strengthen contacts with regional colleges and universities
- Reach out to populations that use the Riverway but are not being reached by existing media and non-personal services

#### **Partnerships**

- Work with University of Wisconsin River Falls to develop a St. Croix River Field Institute to provide programs about the Riverway and river valley to a wide range of audiences
- Participate in developing a cooperative program/speaker series along the Namekagon River
- Work in cooperation with arts organizations to celebrate and experience Riverway resources
- Work with tourism-related organizations and businesses to help people use and appreciate the Riverway
- Support and expand interpretive volunteer opportunities to participate in Riverway stewardship including the River Rovers, volunteers who promote a safe river experience
- Create products for use by Incidental Business Permit holders that promote safe use and appreciation of Riverway resources

Achievement of the recommendations that are listed in this "Executive Summary" (and described in detail in the LRIP's "Future Interpretive Program" section) is subject to the Riverway's funding and its relationships and coordination with its partners.

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